Chapter 8:

Managing the Food Safety System

If you've already taught Chapter 5, you know that it focuses on HACCP — the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point system. Using the text and teaching aids, you've introduced this process to trainees and shown them how they can use it as a tool.

Chapter 8 takes another look at HACCP, but from a different viewpoint — yours, as a food service manager. It's designed to help you implement HACCP in *your* facility... if you are not already using it, that is.

• Why Use HACCP in Your Facility?

As a food service manager, you are responsible for protecting your customers by serving safe and wholesome food. To accomplish this, you've got to *educate* your employees and *motivate* them to put into practice at every step what they've learned.

To do this, you need a systematic process for identifying potential hazards, for putting safety procedures in place, and for monitoring the success of your safety system on an ongoing basis. HACCP helps you do all of these things.

Using HACCP, you can *identify* potentially hazardous foods and places in the food preparation process where bacterial contamination, survival, and growth can occur. You can then *take action* to minimize the danger.

HACCP is based on the principle that if the raw ingredients are safe and the process is safe, then the finished product is safe.

• What's Involved in Implementing HACCP?

Implementing HACCP involves *seven* principles. As you proceed, you will…

- Assess the hazards
- Identify "critical control points"
- Establish "critical limits"
- Monitor the "critical control points"
- Take corrective action as needed
- Verify your system's effectiveness
- Develop a recordkeeping system

Step 1: Assess the Hazards

To assess the hazards present at each stage of the preparation process, *track each food* from purchasing and receiving through serving and reheating.

To begin, *review your menus.* Identify all potentially hazardous foods, as well as those foods that may become contaminated during the process.

At this point, you may even want to reduce risks by removing highly hazardous food items from your menu. For example, you may want to avoid egg salad sandwiches if sandwiches must be transported and held before being served.

Once you have surveyed the foods on your menu, evaluate general preparation and cooking procedures to *determine* any points *where contamination might occur.* Next, rank these hazards in terms of severity (how serious are the consequences) as well as probability (how likely are they to occur).

Step 2: Identify "Critical Control Points"

Identify the points in the process where *hazards can be controlled or prevented.* Develop a flowchart or list the steps involved in preparing each potentially hazardous food. Then, identify *procedures* to prevent, reduce, and eliminate recontamination hazards at each step you have listed.

In general, food service workers can *reduce the risk* of foodborne illness by:

- practicing good personal hygiene
- avoiding cross-contamination
- using proper cooking and cooling procedures
- reducing the number of steps involved in preparing and serving

Step 3: Establish "Critical Limits"

In order to be sure a food passes safely through a critical control point, you need to establish critical limits that must be met. These critical limits should be standards that are observable and measurable. They should include precise time, temperature, and sensory requirements.

Specify exactly what should be done to meet each particular standard. For example, instead of saying that a "food must be thoroughly cooked," the standard might say "heat rapidly to an internal temperature of 165°F within 2 hours."

In addition:

Make sure employees have calibrated, metal-stemmed thermometers, and that they use them routinely.

Make sure recipes: (1) state end-cooking, reheating, and hot-holding temperatures; and (2) specific times for thawing, cooking, and cooling foods.

Provide directions for handling leftovers.

Schedule sufficient staff in peak hours to prepare and serve foods safely.

Step 4: Monitor the "Critical Control Points"

Using your flowcharts or lists, follow potentially hazardous foods at every step in the process. Compare your operation's performance with the requirements you have set. Identify any areas of deficiency.

Step 5: Take Corrective Action

Take corrective action as needed. For example, if product temperatures are unacceptable when received, reject the shipment. Or, similarly...

If... Food is contaminated by hands or equipment.

Re-wash or discard it.

If... Temperature is not high enough after cooking.

Continue cooking to the required temperature.

If... Food temperature exceeds 55°F during cold prep or serving.

Discard it.

Step 6: Develop a Recordkeeping System

Develop a recordkeeping system to document the HACCP process and monitor your results. This may be any simple, quick system, such as a log, in which employees can record their compliance with standards at critical control points.

These records are critical, and may provide proof that a foodborne illness *did not* originate with you!

Step 7: Verify Your System's Effectiveness

Verify that the HACCP process in your facility works. You can do this in a number of ways.

For starters, be alert to how often you need to take corrective actions. If you need to take corrective actions frequently, this may indicate a need to change, or at least fine-tune, your system.

In addition, think of tests you can do, like measuring the strength of your sanitizing solution. Also, examine your records and make sure employees are entering actual, valid data.

An inspection by the board of health can provide a good assessment of whether your process is working.

On the following pages, you'll find a sample HACCP checklist. Use this checklist to determine areas in your operation requiring action. Once a month, make observations during production and take corrective action if needed.

Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points

Manager Self-Inspection Checklist

Date _____ Observer _____

Personal Dress and Hygiene

	Yes	No	Corrective Action
Employees wear proper uniform including proper shoes	❑	❑	_____
Hair restraint is worn	❑	❑	_____
Fingernails are short, unpolished, and clean	❑	❑	_____
Jewelry is limited to watch, simple earrings, and plain ring	❑	❑	_____
Hands are washed or gloves are changed at critical points	❑	❑	_____
Open sores, cuts, or splints and bandages on hands are completely covered while handling food	❑	❑	_____
Hands are washed thoroughly using proper hand-washing procedures at critical points	❑	❑	_____
Smoking is observed only in designated areas away from preparation, service, storage, and warewashing areas	❑	❑	_____
Eating, drinking, or chewing gum are observed only in designated areas away from work areas	❑	❑	_____
Employees take appropriate action when coughing or sneezing	❑	❑	_____
Disposable tissues are used and disposed of when coughing/blowing nose	❑	❑	_____

Food Storage and Dry Storage

	Yes	No	Corrective Action
Temperature is between 50°F and 70°F	❑	❑	_____
All food and paper supplies are 6 to 8 inches off the floor	❑	❑	_____
All food is labeled with name and delivery date	❑	❑	_____
The FIFO (First In, First Out) method of inventory is being practiced	❑	❑	_____
There are no bulging or leaking canned goods in storage	❑	❑	_____
Food is protected from contamination	❑	❑	_____
All surfaces and floors are clean	❑	❑	_____
Chemicals are stored away from food and other food-related supplies	❑	❑	_____

Large Equipment

	Yes	No	Corrective Action
Food slicer is clean to sight and touch	❑	❑	_____
Food slicer is sanitized between uses when used with potentially hazardous foods	❑	❑	_____
All other pieces of equipment are clean to sight and touch — equipment on serving lines, storage shelves, cabinets, ovens, ranges, fryers, and steam equipment	❑	❑	_____
Exhaust hood and filters are clean	❑	❑	_____

Refrigerator, Freezer, and Milk Cooler

	Yes	No	Corrective Action
Thermometer is conspicuous and accurate.	❑	❑	_____
Temperature is accurate for piece of equipment	❑	❑	_____
Food is stored 6 inches off floor in walk-ins	❑	❑	_____
Unit is clean	❑	❑	_____
Proper chilling procedures have been practiced	❑	❑	_____
All food is properly wrapped, labeled, and dated	❑	❑	_____
The FIFO (First In, First Out) method of inventory is being practiced	❑	❑	_____

Food Handling

	Yes	No	Corrective Action
Frozen food is thawed under refrigeration or in cold running water	❑	❑	_____
Food is not allowed to be in the "temperature danger zone" for more than 4 hours	❑	❑	_____
Food is tasted using proper method	❑	❑	_____
Food is not allowed to become cross-contaminated	❑	❑	_____
Food is handled with utensils, clean gloved hands, or clean hands	❑	❑	_____
Utensils are handled to avoid touching parts that will be in direct contact with food	❑	❑	_____
Reusable towels are used only for sanitizing equipment surfaces and not for drying hands, utensils, floor, etc	❑	❑	_____

Utensils and Equipment

	Yes	No	Corrective Action
All small equipment and utensils, including cutting boards, are sanitized between uses	❑	❑	_____
Small equipment and utensils are air dried	❑	❑	_____
Work surfaces are clean to sight and touch	❑	❑	_____
Work surfaces are washed and sanitized between uses	❑	❑	_____
Thermometers are washed and sanitized between each use	❑	❑	_____
Can opener is clean to sight and touch	❑	❑	_____
Drawers and racks are clean	❑	❑	_____
Small equipment is inverted, covered, or otherwise protected from dust or contamination when stored	❑	❑	_____

Hot Holding

	Yes	No	Corrective Action
Unit is clean	❑	❑	_____
Food is heated to 165°F before placing in hot holding	❑	❑	_____
Temperature of food being held is above 140°F	❑	❑	_____
Food is protected from contamination	❑	❑	_____

Cleaning and Sanitizing

	Yes	No	Corrective Action
Three-compartment sink is used	❑	❑	_____
Three-compartment sink is properly set up for warewashing (wash, rinse, sanitize)	❑	❑	_____
Chlorine test kit or thermometer is used to check sanitizing rinse	❑	❑	_____
The water temperatures are accurate	❑	❑	_____
If heat sanitizing, the utensils are allowed to remain immersed in 171°F water for 30 seconds	❑	❑	_____
If using chemical sanitizer, it is the proper dilution	❑	❑	_____
The water is clean and free of grease and food particles	❑	❑	_____
The utensils are allowed to air dry	❑	❑	_____
Wiping cloths are stored in sanitizing solution while in use	❑	❑	_____

Garbage Storage and Disposal

	Yes	No	Corrective Action
Kitchen garbage cans are clean	❑	❑	_____
Garbage cans are emptied as necessary	❑	❑	_____
Boxes and containers are removed from site	❑	❑	_____
Loading dock and area around dumpster are clean	❑	❑	_____
Dumpster is closed	❑	❑	_____

Pest Control

	Yes	No	Corrective Action
Screens are on open windows and doors and in good repair	❑	❑	_____
No evidence of pests is present	❑	❑	_____